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ABSTRACT

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) conducts a unified set of surveys that facilitates comparison between public and private schools, school districts, and administrator data. The integrated set of surveys is called the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). A Teacher Followup Survey (TFS) is conducted a year after the SASS survey to collect information on the employment and teaching status, plans, and opinions of teachers in the SASS. The Bureau of the Census is the data collection agent for the SASS, which has four core components: (1) the Teacher Demand and Shortage Survey; (2) the School Principal Survey; (3) the School Survey; and (4) the School Teacher Survey. In certain cycles, questionnaires are added for surveys of interest. The first cycle of the SASS was conducted in the 1987-88 school year, followed by the 1988-89 TFS. The latest cycle was conducted in 1993-94, followed by the 1994-95 TFS. The next expected SASS collection will be in 1998-99. The 1993-94 SASS selected 13,000 schools, including 176 administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and 68,000 teachers. SASS and TFS data are available as public-use data and as restricted-use data for approved educational researchers. This publication describes the contents of the four SASS components and the TFS, discusses the survey design and the operational procedures used to collect the data, and reviews sample selection procedures, the imputation system for item nonresponse, and other technical information. A list of 163 NCES data products related to the SASS and TFS is included. (Contains two tables.) (SLD)

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An Overview of the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS)

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The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is the primary federal entity for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data related to education in the United States and other nations. It fulfills a congressional mandate to collect, collate, analyze, and report full and complete statistics on the condition of education in the United States; conduct and publish reports and specialized analyses of the meaning and significance of such statistics; assist state and local education agencies in improving their statistical systems; and review and report on education activities in foreign countries.

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An Overview of the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS)

INTRODUCTION

In the mid 1980s, The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) - a component of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement in the U.S. Department of Education - conducted a number of surveys concerning schools and school personnel. These surveys were designed to collect data on, among other issues, the demographics of the student population, the varying demand for teachers in all regions of the nation, the educational qualifications of school teachers and administrators, and the working conditions of teachers.

The surveys conducted during this time period included the Private School Surveys of 1983-84 and 1985-86, the Public School Survey of 1984-85, the Teacher Demand and Shortage Survey of 1983-84. Data from these surveys have been used by Congress, state education departments, federal agencies, private school associations, and educational research organizations.

In 1985, NCES undertook a critical review and redesign of its elementary and secondary school data system, identifying gaps in content and in design. As a result of this review, NCES working with the Rand Corporation redesigned that part of the elementary/secondary system concerned with teacher demand and shortage, teacher and administrator characteristics, school programs, and general conditions in schools.

This effort resulted in a unified set of surveys that facilitates comparison between public and private schools and allows linkages of teachers, schools, school districts, and administrator data. The integrated set of surveys is called the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). A Teacher Followup Survey (TFS) is conducted a year after the SASS survey to collect information on the teacher's employment and teaching status, educational activities and future plans, and opinions on school climate and job perception.

SASS has four core components: the Teacher Demand and Shortage Survey, the School Principal Survey, the School Survey, and the School Teacher Survey. These surveys were sent to public and private schools. During the 1990-91 cycle an Indian School Questionnaire was added. During the 1993-94 cycle, the following surveys were added: Indian School Teacher Questionnaire, Indian Principal Questionnaire, a Student Records Questionnaire (one version for all 3 school types: Public, Private and Indian), Library Media Center Questionnaire (Public, Private, and Indian), and Library Media Specialist/Librarian Questionnaire (Public, Private, and Indian).

The first cycle of the SASS was conducted during the 1987-88 school year followed by the 1988-89 TFS. The second cycle of the SASS was conducted during the 1990-91 school year followed by the 1991-92 TFS. The third cycle of the SASS was conducted during the school year 1993-94 followed by the 1994-95 TFS. The data tapes and CD Roms from these surveys are available through NCES. The next expected collection of the SASS will take place in 1998-99.

The U.S. Bureau of the Census was the data collection agent for the SASS. They conduct the SASS under NCES legislation "to collect, and analyze, and disseminate statistics and other data related to education in the United States and in other nations" (Section 406(b) of the General Education Provisions Act, as amended (20 U.S.C. 122le-1)). The SASS was a mail-out/mail-back survey. Except for the questionnaires sent to school districts and to private schools, telephone followup was computer assisted in the 1993-94 cycle. The Student Records Questionnaire had a few personal visit interviews. A main feature of the SASS data collection was the ability to link the

different components to examine the characteristics of the schools, principals, teachers, and students.

SASS and TFS data are available in two versions: the public-use data; and, for NCES-approved researchers, the restricted-use data. The public-use versions place individual data such as salaries into general categories and reduce the level of geography available. Researchers who meet a set of qualifications described later may obtain restricted-use data containing individual-level data that permit linkage between all the SASS components for statistical research purposes.

NCES encourages educators, policy makers, and researchers to make further use of these data. On the pages that follow, readers will find descriptions of the contents of the four SASS components and the TFS, a discussion of the survey design, operational procedures used to collect these data, sample selection procedures, the imputation system for item nonresponse, and other technical information.

For more information on the survey design and procedures, see *Quality Profile For SASS*: Aspects of the Quality of Data in the Schools and Staffing Surveys (SASS), (Jabine, T., NCES 94-340). The information below describes the 1993-94 SASS, unless otherwise noted.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND POLICY ISSUES

The analytical objectives for the 1993-94 SASS address several major areas of concern. Educators and educational policy makers may use data from SASS to characterize and analyze:

1. The nation's public and private elementary and secondary teaching force;

2. The nation's elementary and secondary public and private schools, their programs and policies;

3. Demographic characteristics, educational background and experiences of the nations's elementary and secondary school principals;

4. Teacher salaries, teacher retirement plans, teacher incentive plans, and staff training programs;

5. Estimates of teachers, by race, certification status, teaching experiences and training;

6. Characteristics of newly hired teachers and the sources of supply of new teachers;

7. The demographic and economic characteristics of current and former teachers (movers, leavers, and stayers);

8. Data on students, programs, and services used; and

9. Data on school libraries (supplies and materials) and librarian's salaries, benefits, and educational background.

Furthermore, the SASS sample has been designed to support the following types of estimates and comparisons:

- national estimates for public and private schools, teachers, and administrators;
- state estimates for public schools, teachers, school libraries, and librarians;
- state/elementary, state/secondary, and national combined public school estimates;
- private school association estimates and grade level estimates;
- estimates of change from 1988 to 1994 in school level characteristics;
- national estimates of school characteristics for schools with greater than 19.5% Indian enrollment;
- national estimates of public and private school student demographics;

- national estimates for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools, teachers, administrators, students, libraries, and librarians;
- national estimates for public and private school libraries, librarians, and students by school level and urbanicity;
- national estimates for private school libraries, librarians, and students by major affiliation (Catholic, Other religious, and Non-sectarian).

SASS data can then be used to address, at least in part, policy issues like the following:

- What is the extent of turnover in the nation's teaching force?
- What are the sources of new teachers?
- Do the nation's teachers have aadequate academic backgrounds?
- Are the nation's school administrators fully prepared to carry out their functions as educational and managerial leaders?
- How are school programs and policies related to teacher turnover and attrition?
- How do geographic location, community size, and school size affect students' access to programs and services?
- What are the academic requirements for graduation in the United States, and how do they vary by state and type of school?

SURVEY CONTENT

The **Teacher Listing Form** was mailed at the beginning of the school year to all public, private, and BIA schools in the SASS sample to obtain a complete list of all the teachers employed at each school. The form includes space for schools to indicate the race/ethnicity of each teacher, whether the teacher is "new" (less than 3 years of experience), whether the teacher is bilingual and/or teaching English as a Second Language, and the teacher's assignment (subject matter and/or grade level). The information gathered through this form is used to select the sample for the SASS Teacher Survey.

The **Teacher Demand and Shortage Survey** was mailed only to public school districts. Comparable data for private and BIA schools were collected on the Private School and Indian School questionnaires. The questionnaire is divided into five sections. The first section requested information about student enrollment in the school district. The second section requested information about the number of teachers (in full-time-equivalents-FTEs), teacher qualifications, new hires, and hiring criteria. The third section requested information about library media specialists/librarians. The fourth section requested information about programs and services provided by the school district. The last section, on district policies, requested information on teacher salary schedules, staff training incentives, and high school graduation requirements.

The data obtained from the Teacher Demand and Shortage Survey provide indicators of teacher demand and shortage and estimates of the number of teachers who hold certification in their field of assignment in 1993–94. Additions to the 1993-94 Teacher Demand and Shortage questionnaire were made in the areas of staffing and district programs and policies. School districts were asked to provide the number of itinerant FTE teachers, the number of FTE media specialists/librarians who were laid off, and whether or not the district has an agreement with a teacher's union or organization for the purpose of collective bargaining or meet-and-confer discussions. Districts were asked about programs for children in the years before kindergarten, the provision of Chapter 1 services, and participation in the National School Lunch Program. Questions concerning community service requirements for the class of 1994 and if districts have written policies regarding drug, alcohol, and tobacco use/abuse were also added to the 1993-94 SASS.

The **School Principal Survey** obtained information about the age, sex, race/ethnicity, and perceptions of school principals/school heads. Questions required both objective responses (e.g., number of years of teaching experience) and judgmental responses (e.g., ranking the seriousness of school problems). The data derived from this survey describe characteristics of school principals/school heads and provide an insight into which school problems administrators view as serious and how they perceive their influence on school policies. In 1993-94, three versions of the School Principal Questionnaires were sent respectively to the principals or heads of public schools, private schools, and BIA schools. The three versions contained only minor differences in phrasing to reflect possible differences in governing bodies and position titles between public schools, private schools, and BIA schools.

The 1993-94 questionnaire for the School Principal Survey was expanded from previous cycles to collect information on second bachelor's and master's degrees, the college or university from which the bachelor's degree was received, grade levels for the school previously served as principal, and number of years served in school positions other than as a principal or teacher. Additional locus-of-control items have been included, and the number of school problems rated for seriousness has been increased. One area which can be considered as completely new covers breaks in service as a principal.

The **School Survey** questionnaires were sent to public schools, private schools, and Bureau of Indian Affairs schools. The private school version of the questionnaire included items for identifying the religious or other affiliation of the school. Private and BIA School Questionnaires also asked about the number of teachers (in FTEs), hiring criteria, incentives for staff training, and high school graduation requirements (this information was obtained for public schools through the Teacher Demand and Shortage Survey). All versions of this survey obtained information about schools such as student enrollment, staffing patterns, teaching vacancies, teacher turnover, types of programs and services offered, length of school day and school year, high school graduation rates, and college application rates.

Additions to the 1993-94 School Survey questionnaires from previous cycles include new items on National Education Goals for the year 2000 (e.g., school safety and policies to prevent alcohol and other drug use by students), school governance, Limited-English Proficient students, and preschool activities. On the Public and BIA School questionnaires, a new item on American Indian/Alaska Native courses was added. A few items, such as counts of staff and free or reduced-price lunch participation, were reworded to clarify the meaning of the question for respondents. A number of formatting changes were also made to aid the flow of the questionnaire.

The **Teacher Survey** questionnaires were sent to teachers in public schools, private schools, and BIA schools. The three versions of the questionnaire were virtually identical. The survey collected data from teachers regarding their education and training, teaching assignment, teaching experience, certification, teaching workload, perceptions and attitudes about teaching, job mobility, and workplace conditions.

The questionnaire for the 1993-94 Teacher Survey features expanded certification categories (including alternative teacher certification), an expanded section on teacher professional development and in-service education, questions about benefits received (comparable to questions in the administrator questionnaire), and a return to the 1987-88 SASS teacher opinion items.

In 1993-94, a **Student Records** component was added to the SASS. The questionnaire solicits information about a student that can be answered by a school administrator using the student's school record. The survey provides information on the types of services students receive, and the types of math and science courses they are enrolled in. The students can be linked to their schools and teachers.

SASS

The 1993-94 SASS included, for the first time, a supplemental **Library Survey.** The supplement consists of two questionnaires — one focusing on the library and media equipment and services made available to students and the other focusing on the qualifications and working conditions of the school library media specialist/ librarian. Both surveys were sent to public schools, private schools, and BIA schools.

The **Teacher Followup Survey** (TFS) was sent the year following the SASS in school year 1994-95 to a sample of participants in the SASS Teacher Survey. These questionnaires were of two types: a version for participants who were still teaching, and another version for those who had left the teaching profession. In addition to questions about employment and teaching status and about possible sources of dissatisfaction with teaching as a profession, the questionnaires included questions about family size and income. Data derived from the TFS allow for comparative analysis of public and private school teacher job satisfaction and movement within and out of the teaching profession.

Although the **Private School Survey** (PSS) is not part of the SASS, it is used as the SASS sampling frame for private schools. PSS provides information on student enrollment, length of school year and school day, graduation and college application rates, number of teachers, and religious affiliation and association membership. It is conducted on all private schools in the nation. Since both the PSS and SASS were administered in 1993-94, special steps were taken to avoid sending both questionnaires to the private schools in the SASS sample. The private schools in the SASS sample were not sent a PSS questionnaire; instead, the PSS items were embedded in the SASS private school questionnaire.

TARGET POPULATION

The target populations for the 1993-94 SASS were public school districts, public, private, and BIA schools with students in any of grades 1-12, principals of those schools, teachers in public and private schools who teach students in grades K-12, and schools that have libraries and librarians (library media specialists).

ESTIMATES

SASS was designed to provide estimates for public schools at both the national and state levels; private schools were selected to be representative at the national and association levels; and all the BIA schools were included in the survey.

The 1993-94 SASS selected 13,000 schools (9,784 public, 3,360 private, and 176 BIA) and administrators, and 68,000 teachers (56,736 public, 11,548 private), 5,500 school districts associated with the selected schools and 100 districts not associated with schools, 6,900 students, and 7,600 libraries and librarians.

SAMPLING FRAMES

The 1991-92 Common Core of Data (CCD) served as the sampling frame for the public school sample. These data are collected annually by the NCES from all state education agencies. This frame includes regular public schools, Department of Defense operated military base schools, and special purpose schools such as special education, vocational, and alternative schools. Schools outside of the United States, and schools that only teach prekindergarten, kindergarten or postsecondary students were deleted from the file.

The sampling frame for private schools was the 1991-92 Private School Survey, updated with 1992-93 association lists. This data collection uses two components to develop estimates of the number of private schools in the United States. A list frame was the primary private school frame and an area frame was used to identify schools not included on the list frame and thereby compensate for the undercoverage of the list frame.

The Indian frame consisted of a list of all elementary, secondary, and combined schools that the BIA operated or funded during the 1991-92 school year. The entire list of these schools was included in the SASS sample.

The population of teachers included teachers who were employed by the public, private, and BIA schools described above during the fall of 1993. The sample of teachers was selected from a list of all teachers who taught students in grades K-12 for each school in sample.

The population of students included anyone in grades K-12 who was taught by a teacher described above during the fall of 1993. The sample of students was selected from class rosters obtained for sampled class periods from a subsample of the total sample of teachers. Teachers were subsampled from public, private,, and BIA schools.

EDITS

Questionnaires returned by individual respondents and those completed by field representatives in the telephone followup were sent to the Census Bureau. Upon receipt, clerks assigned codes to each questionnaire to indicate its status — e.g. complete interview, refusal, deceased (for teachers and students), school no longer exists. Fractions were rounded to whole numbers. Other codes were assigned when applicable.

The next step in processing was to make a preliminary determination of each case's interview status (ISR) — i.e., whether it was an interview, a noninterview, or was an out-of-scope respondent. After this step a computer preedit program generate a list of cases where problems occurred as defined by edit specifications, depending on each survey. After preedit corrections were made, each file was subjected to another computer edit. This edit consisted of a range check, a consistency edit, and a blanking edit.

After the completion of the range check, consistency edit, and blanking edit, the records were put through another edit to make a final determination of whether the case was eligible for the survey, and, if so, whether sufficient data had been collected for the case to be classified as an interview. A final interview status recode (ISR) value was assigned to each case as a result of the edit.

IMPUTATION

For questionnaire items that should have been answered but were not, values were imputed by (1) using data from other items on the questionnaire, (2) extracting data from a related component of the SASS, (3) extracting data from the sample file (PSS or CCD), and (4) extracting data from the record for a sample case with similar characteristics (commonly known as the "hot deck" method for imputing for item nonresponse).

WEIGHTING

Sample units were weighted to produce national and state estimates for public and BIA schools, teachers, administrators, LEAs (public only), students (nationally only), libraries, and librarians. The private sector was weighted to produce national and affiliation group estimates.

RESPONSE RATES

Below are the unweighted and weighted questionnaire response rates for the SASS components. The unweighted response rates are defined as the number of in-scope responding questionnaires divided by the number of in-scope sample cases. The weighted response rates are defined the same way, using the base weight (inverse of the probability of selection) of the record.

Weighted and unweighted SASS questionare response rates, 1993-94

Survey Type	Unweighted response rate	Weighted response rate[1]
Teacher Demand and Shortage (LEA)	93.1	93.9
Public School Administrator	96.6	96.6
Private School Administrator	90.3	87.6
Indian School Administrator	98.7	98.7
Public School	92.0	92.3
Private School	84.1	83.2
Indian School	99.3	99.3
Public Teacher[2]	88.9	88.2
Private Teacher[3]	80.6	80.2
Indian Teacher	87.1	86.6
Public School Student[4]	90.2	91.2
Private School Student[5]	87.6	88.4
Indian School Student[6]	93.7	92.7
Public School Library	91.1	89.9
Private School Library	77.7	68.8
Indian Library	89.4	89.4
Public School Librarian	93.5	92.3
Private School Librarian	83.9	76.5
Indian Librarian	88.3	88.3

[1]Weighted using the inverse of the probability of selection.
[2]These rates do not include the 5 percent of public schools that did not provide teacher list.
[3]These rates do not include the 9 percent of private schools that did not provide teacher list.
[4]These rates do not include the 12 percent of public schools that did not participate in student sampling.
[5]These rates do not include the 21 percent of private schools that did not participate in student sampling.
[6]These rates do not include the 6 percent of Indian schools that did not participate in student sampling.

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Summary of unweighted item response rates by SASS questionnare. 1993-94

Questionare	Range of item response rates	Percent of items with a response rate of 90% or more	Percent of items with c response rate of less than 75%
LEAs (SASS- 1A)	67-100%	91%	1%
Principals			
Public (SASS-2A)	65-100%	92%	4%
Private (SASS-2B)	55-100%	90%	6%
Indian (SASS-2C)	72-100%	91%	1%
Schools			
Public (SASS-3A)	83-100%	83%	0%
Private (SASS-3B)	61-100%	77%	3%
Indian (SASS-3C)	70-100%	84%	1%
Teachers			
Public (SASS-4A)	71-100%	91%	0%
Private (SASS-4B)	69-100%	89%	1%
Indian (SASS-4C)	70-100%	84%	3%
Students (SASS-5)			
Public	90-100%	97%	0%
Private	84-100%	97%	0%
Indian	79-100%	88%	0%
Libray Media Center			
Public (LS-1A)	57-99%	81%	5%
Private (LS-1B)	66-99%	80%	4%
Indian (LS-1C)	61-100%	82%	1%
Librarians			
Public (LS-2A)	61-100%	87%	6%
Private (LS-2B)	50-100%	80%	11%
Indian (LS-2C)	56-100%	87%	5%

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CHANGES IN SASS DESIGN AND CONTENT FROM 1991 TO 1994

Several changes in survey procedures, design, and content were made between the completion of the second cycle of the SASS (1990–91) and the implementation of the third cycle of the SASS in school year 1993–94.

Design Changes

Below is a summary of the changes made to the 1993–94 sample design.

1. To improve the precision of the 1993–94 private sector estimates, the 1991–92 Private School Survey (PSS) was used as a sampling frame. The private school stratum definitions were based on the 1991–92 school reports of association membership and affiliation.

2. Private school weights were adjusted so that the total number of private schools in the 1993–94 SASS agrees with the total number of private schools in the 1993–94 PSS.

3. For the private sector, the sample was reallocated to publish estimates for one additional association, making a total of 19 associations.

4. In the 1993–94 SASS, a library/librarian survey was initiated, as well as a student administrative records survey.

5. The cutoff for the identification of a Native American school was changed from an enrollment greater than 25 percent to an enrollment greater than 19.5 percent.

6. All the Bureau of Indian Affairs schools were included in the 1993-94 SASS.

7. Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) facilities were used extensively for the nonresponse followup of the teacher survey, librarian survey, library survey, public school survey, and administrator survey.

8. Teacher lists from sample schools were keyed to provide better control over sample sizes by stratum and to improve the effectiveness of the sort.

9. Administrators who teach were eligible for the teacher sample in addition to receiving an administrator questionnaire.

New Components

For the 1993–94 school year, three components were added to the SASS:

The **Student Records Questionnaire** which collected student data from school administrative records;

The **Library Media Center Questionnaires** which collected data on school libraries;

The **Library Media Specialist/Librarian Questionnaires** which collected data on school librarians;

Content Changes

The following data items were added to each survey.

Teacher Demand and Shortage Questionnaire was expanded to include additional questions on participation in prekindergarten, federal lunch, Chapter 1, and choice programs; new data were collected on community service requirements for high school graduation, position abolishment due to budget cuts, emergency certification, policies on discipline and or drug use, and incentives for completion of training or college courses.

School Principal Questionnaire was expanded to include questions on where the principal's college degree was earned, as well as information on other degrees. Other new items included if principal ever taught, breaks in his/her education career, and the year when he/she will be eligible for retirement.

School Questionnaire was expanded to include additional questions on Limited English Proficiency (LEP), prekindergarten, job placement, tech-prep, drug, alcohol, American Indian programs.

Teacher Questionnaire was expanded to include questions on where his/her college degrees were earned, information on other degrees, certification in what he/she was currently teaching, opinions about violence in the school, and year when eligible for retirement.

TIMING

The 1993-94 school district, principal, library, and librarian questionnaires were mailed in October 1993; school questionnaires and about three-fourths of the teacher questionnaires were mailed in early December. Data collection for all SASS components ended in Spring 1994.

CONFIDENTIALITY PROTECTION MEASURES

SASS data are released in accordance with the provisions of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20-USC 1221e-1) and the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act.

Under Public Law 100-297, the National Center for Education Statistics is responsible for protecting the confidentiality of individual respondents and releases data for statistical purposes only. Record matching or deductive disclosure by any user is prohibited.

To ensure that the confidentiality provisions contained in PL 100-297 have been fully implemented, procedures for disclosure avoidance were used in preparing public-use microdata for release. Every effort was made to provide the maximum research information consistent with reasonable confidentiality protections.

The data are made available in on abridged form to researchers and the general public. Identification items on these public-use data are coded or deleted to protect the confidentiality of survey participants. Researchers who meet a set of qualifications may obtain restricted-use data containing codes that facilitate linkage between surveys for statistical research purposes.

DATA PRODUCTS

Public-Use Data

In the public-use data all state identifiers and stratum codes have been removed to prevent the disclosure of identities of individual administrators, teachers, and students. Detailed affiliation codes for private schools have been collapsed into three categories: Catholic, Other Religious, and Non-sectarian. On the Administrator and Teacher file income, age, and college or university, were coded into categories for the public-use data. CD ROMS are the principal medium for obtaining SASS public-use microdata. Data tapes are also available by calling the NCES' National Education Data Resource Center at 703-845-3151 or fax the request to 703-820-7465 or use the NEDRC Internet address: nedrc@inet.ed.gov.

Restricted-Use Data

Researchers requesting access to the restricted data must obtain a license to use these data by providing the following information:

1. The title of the survey(s) to which access is desired.

2. A detailed discussion of the statistical research project which necessitates accessing the NCES survey.

3. The name and title of the most senior official having the authority to bind the organization to the provisions of the license agreement.

4. The name and title of the principal project officer who will oversee the daily operations.

5. The phone number, names(s) and title(s) of professional and technical staff who will be accessing the survey data base.

6. The estimated loan period necessary for accessing the NCES survey data base.

7. The desired computer media format and conversion (e.g. 9-track tape, CD ROM, or ASCII, EBCDIC).

Return all of the above information to:

Restricted-Use Data
Statistical Standards and Methodology
Services Group
NCES/OERI
U.S. Department of Education
555 New Jersey Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20208

SASS RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

In order to improve methods and procedures for future data collection cycles of the SASS, NCES staff work with the Bureau of the Census Staff and with researchers in the private sector and academic communities to improve methods and procedures. The following is a list of projects in the SASS research and evaluation program:

Planning and Development

• SASS Redesign Project — The aim of this project is to help evaluate the role of the SASS in the elementary and secondary data collection programs of the NCES and to plan for the 1998-99 administration of the survey. The project will help identify the current uses of the data, as well as emerging educational research topics to be covered in future administrations of the SASS. As part of the project, 11 papers have been commissioned to examine the design and content of the SASS and make recommendations for improving, focusing, and expanding the use of the SASS for educational research.

• Teacher Instructional Practices — This project will advance survey methods of capturing information about classroom instruction, and improve NCES' ability to measure and describe the educational experiences of students for the purpose of better understanding their academic achievement. A national random sample of secondary mathematics teachers will complete a survey of instructional practices; a subsample will also provide more detailed daily information with which to assess reporting consistency between the two methods. Results will inform decisions about incorporating specific items into current NCES data collection activities.

• Private School Finance Questionnaire — This project is part of a larger project whose goal is to establish a private school finance data collection. The initial phase established the difficulty of collecting common finance data through the private school associations. This project involves creating a set of finance items that can either be added to an existing survey of private schools or be used as the basis for an entire questionnaire dedicated to private school finance.

• Feasibility of Conducting a Longitudinal Survey of Schools — This study will evaluate the substantive advantages and disadvantages and the technical feasibility of undertaking a longitudinal study of schools. The project is made up of two activities. The first one evaluates the suitability of using current NCES cross-sectional data systems for longitudinal analyses of school organization. The 30 percent sample overlap in consecutive SASS surveys is used to study weighting issues and analysis procedures relevant to a longitudinal survey of schools. The second bactivity combines the SASS example with a conceptual paper, including recommendations on the feasibility of adopting components of a longitudinal design, burden constraints, weighting issues, context changes, design adaptations, and potential mergers of current NCES data systems. Various experts in the fields of organization research and school research and policy will be consulted as background for the conceptual paper.

• Professional Development, Teaching Quality, and Student Learning: Recommendations for National Data Collection — NCES is conducting a study to identify the relationships among professional development, teaching quality, and student learning for the purpose of defining data collection items that can accurately portray those relationships at the national level. As reform movements seemingly sweep the nation, professional development will become an increasingly important vehicle through which schools and jurisdictions can meet their instructional goals. Through this study, NCES hopes to advance efforts to assess professional development in large scale surveys.

The project has three major parts: (1) investigating and synthesizing existing research on the relationships among three elements (professional development, teaching quality, and student learning) and on the current means of measuring professional development; (2) determining the specific and future data needs within OERI, NCES, the Institutes and Labs, and the National Goals Panel; and (3) recommending a direction for future data collection and reporting on professional development.

• Development of a SASS Student Achievement Subfile through Linkage to State Assessment SASS provides in-depth data on teachers and school programs, services, and climates. The value of SASS can be enhanced by adding student outcome data. An inexpensive source of school-level outcome data for studying schools within each state is existing state assessments; and by transforming to a common metric across states, within-state results can be pooled across states. Because most states participate in State NAEP, linkage to NAEP can be used to construct a common metric for state assessments, which even though they will not support between-state comparisons, will facilitate important policy studies. To address questions of power, accuracy, and generalizability, a pilot study merging school-level state assessment data in a few states with 1993-94 SASS will evaluate the feasibility and usefulness of this strategy to enhance SASS.

Sampling Frame

• PSS Frame Updating Matching System Improvement — The 1995 PSS list frame matching operation incorporated some automation features (e.g., computer matching files, string searching to identify possible matches) which improved the timing, cost and accuracy of this matching operation. This project investigates other improvements that could be made to this matching system (e.g., more computer matching of files, use other matching systems available at the Census Bureau, have the computer make more of the matching decisions), implement these improvements, and test the performance of this improved matching system. The effects of the changes in the matching procedures on the unduplication process will be measured and compared with previous PSS enumerations.

• Private School Time Series — Both SASS and PSS are used to produce estimates of the private school universe. In the past, these surveys have generally collected data for different school years (except for the most recent surveys which both covered the 1993-94 school year). As such, these estimates could be used to form a private school time series. Unfortunately, due to some differences in SASS and PSS (e.g., different area frame and list frame updating was used), the estimates from SASS and PSS are somewhat inconsistent. Based on current planning, the next SASS will cover the 1998-99 school year and the next PSS will cover the 1995-96, 1997-98, 1999-2000,... school years. This research will study SASS and PSS design and procedural changes that will enable a more consistent private school time series to be produced.

• Private School Area Frame PSU Design Changes — Both PSS and the private school component of the SASS include an area frame operation which identifies schools missing from the private school list frame. This area frame operation is conducted in about 125 sample PSUs. Although new samples of PSUs are selected, basically the same sample design methodology has been used for these frames. Recently, some research was completed that developed the methodology to

model the undercoverage of private schools from the list frame. The area frame PSU design research will identify alternative design changes that use the different aspects of the undercoverage model. The design changes will be evaluated in terms of their expected effect on the efficiency of the sample design.

Questionnaire Design

• Cognitive Research on The Teacher List Form — The sample frame used to select the teacher sample for SASS is created from the data captured in the teacher listing form data collection operation. The version of the teacher listing form used during the 1993-94 SASS experienced some data problems (e.g., the race of some teachers was misclassified as Native American rather than white). This research will involve the development of a revised teacher listing form that addresses the problems encountered during the 1993-94 data collection cycle.

• Cognitive Research on the SASS Teacher Questionnaire — The Center for Survey Methods Research of the Bureau of the Census is evaluating selected questions on the Teacher Questionnaire — their experience, training, workload and attitudes. New (total teaching experience is less than 3 years) and experienced teachers will be interviewed from public and private schools.

• Cognitive Research on Reporting Association Membership in the Private School Survey (PSS) — The Cognitive Studies Group of The Bureau of Labor Statistics is evaluating the PSS items used to determine private school religious orientation and affiliation, and association membership. This study will result in the modification and reformatting of existing items.

Data Collection

• Improving Mail Response — The data collection procedures used for SASS, TFS, and PSS involve an initial mail component which includes several mailings and reminders, and then a telephone follow-up of the mail nonresponses. Improvements made to the mail response rates for these surveys will be beneficial to the overall cost of these surveys. This research includes a review of the work done to improve mail response rates for other mail data collections (e.g., the Decennial Census) to identify techniques useful for SASS, TFS, and PSS.

• Public School Teacher Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) Test — The increased use of technology has resulted in more extensive use of CATI. The SASS has traditionally used a decentralized telephone follow-up data collection for nonresponding teachers. During the 1993-94 SASS, the teacher survey split nonrespondents into a sample designed for the traditional telephone follow-up and a sample designated for CATI follow-up. This project will analyze the differences in estimates by selected teacher characteristics between the CATI and traditional telephone follow-up.

Nonresponse

• 1990-91 Nonresponse Study — Nonresponse studies are motivated by a need to measure the success of the sampling scheme, explain nonresponse where possible, control and adjust survey estimates for bias, and improve survey operations. The 1990-91 SASS Nonresponse Study examined factors related to nonresponding schools, districts, teachers, and principals. These characteristics are limited to data available for all sampled cases, such as the school or district enrollment size, the geographic locale of the school, the state in which the unit was located or the type of private school, and so forth. Both descriptive data and a logistic regression model of the data were analyzed.

• 1993-94 Nonresponse Study — The 1993-94 SASS Nonresponse Study extends the work of the earlier nonresponse study by examining nonresponse characteristics for the new components: library/media centers, librarians, and student records. Other frame variables of potential interest will be investigated. Additionally, the effects of cumulative hierarchical nonresponse (such as the school's nonresponse factored into the percentage of schools not providing a teacher list) will be

analyzed. Analysis of the new SASS components (student records, school libraries, and school librarians) will be examined for the effects of cumulative nonresponse.

Reinterview

• Reinterview Studies of NCES — Most of the data collection programs of NCES have some variation of reinterview study completed as part of the field test or as part of the main study. Correlations or gross difference rates for selected items are usually reported. The purpose of this study is to summarize the results of recent NCES reinterview studies, describe how the reinterview study was done, and analyze how the results were used.

Estimation

• Improved Generalized Least Squares (GLS) Estimation in NCES Surveys — PSS and SASS both measure the number of teachers, students, and schools. The respective SASS and PSS estimates do not always agree. In terms of reliability and consistency, SASS estimates would be improved if they agreed with PSS estimates. Simple raking procedures can be used to make PSS and SASS agree for any one of these variables. In fact, the 1993-94 SASS is adjusted to 1993-94 PSS estimate of the total number of schools in the nation. However, raking will not work if it is desired to make the three estimates agree simultaneously. This study is an attempt to use GLS methodology to adjust SASS weights so the SASS estimates of the number of schools, teachers and students agree with the PSS.

• Private School State Estimates — PSS has been used to produce state estimates for private schools. The area frame component of PSS is designed for regional estimates. Hence, not every state has selected PSUs in the area frame. This leads to some state estimates that assume no school undercoverage. This is not likely to be true. This study is an attempt to use small area estimation procedures to develop undercoverage estimates in every state, thereby, improving the PSS state estimates.

Periodicity

• SASS Periodicity Study — Given the current government budget constraints, the question of the frequency of the SASS data collection is an important question. SASS is now on a five year cycle although originally envisioned for a two year cycle. To more formally address this issue, mathematical models can be formulated to measure the sampling error and the error associated with using the previous value until a new value is collected. These models can be applied to the SASS estimates assuming different periodicities and a fixed yearly costs. This study uses SASS data across the last three cycles to determine the optimum periodicity for SASS.

Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) DATA PRODUCTS

The following SASS data products may be obtained free of charge while supplies last from:

U.S. Department of Education
National Center for Education Statistics
SASS Data Products
555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Room 422
Washington, DC 20208-5651

Reports

- Out-of-Field Teaching and Educational Equality (NCES 96-040)
- Schools and Staffing in the United States: A Statistical Profile: 1993–94 (NCES 96-124)
- Private School Universe Survey, 1993–94 (NCES 96-143)
- SASS by State, 1993-94 Schools and Staffing Survey: Selected State Results (NCES 96-312)
- Comparing Key Organizational Qualities of American Public and Private Secondary Schools (NCES 96-322)
- Schools and Staffing in the United States: Selected Data for Public and Private Schools, 1993-94 (E.D. Tab, NCES 95-191)
- Private Schools in the United States: A Statistical Profile, 1990–91 (NCES 95-330)
- Teacher Supply in the U.S.: Sources of Newly Hired Teachers in Public and Private Schools, 1988–1991(NCES 95-348)
- Characteristics of American Indian and Alaska Native Education, Results from the 1990–91 SASS (NCES 95-735)
- Teacher Supply, Teacher Qualifications and Teacher Turnover, Aspects of Teacher Supply and Demand in the U.S., 1990–91 (NCES 95-744)
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- Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Followup Survey, 1991-92 (E.D. Tab, NCES 94-337)
- SASS by State (NCES 94-343)
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- Where Do Minority Principals Work? (Issue Brief, NCES 96-840)
- What Academic Programs are Offered Most Frequently in Schools Serving American Indian and Alaska Native Students? (Issue Brief, NCES 96-841)
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- An Exploratory Analysis of Nonrespondents in the 1990-91 Schools and Staffing Survey (NCES 96-338)

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- Design Effects and Generalized Variance Functions for the 1990–91 Schools and Staffing Surveys (SASS) Volume II--Technical Report (NCES 95-340II)

- Quality Profile for SASS: Aspects of the Quality of Data in the Schools and Staffing Surveys (Technical Report, NCES 94-340)

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- Modeling Teacher Supply and Demand, with Commentary (Research and Development Report, NCES 93-461)

- 1987-88 Schools and Staffing Survey: Sample Design and Estimation (Technical Report, NCES 91-127)

CD-ROMs

- Schools and Staffing Survey: 1993–94 Electronic Codebook and Public Use Data

- Schools and Staffing Survey: 1990–91 Electronic Codebook and Public Use Data

- Schools and Staffing Survey, 1987–88 Microdata and Documentation

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- SASS and TFS Questionnaires 1990–1991

- SASS and TFS Questionnaires 1987–1988

User's Manuals

- 1990–91 Schools and Staffing Survey: Data File User's Manual Volume I: Survey Documentation (NCES 93-144-I)

- 1990–91 Schools and Staffing Survey: Data File User's Manual Volume II: Restricted-Use codebook (NCES 93-144-II)

• 1990–91 Schools and Staffing Survey: Data File User's Manual Volume III: Public-Use codebook (NCES 93-144-III)

• 1990–91 Schools and Staffing Survey: Data File User's Manual Volume IV: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Restricted-Use Codebooks: Administrator, Schools, and Teachers (NCES 93-144-IV)

• 1991–92 Teacher Followup Survey Data File User's Manual—Public-Use Version (NCES 94-331)

• 1991–92 Teacher Followup Survey Data File User's Manual—Restricted-Use Version (NCES 94-478)

• 1988–89 Teacher Followup Survey Data File User's Manual—Public-Use Version (NCES 92-058)

Forthcoming User's Manuals

• 1993–94 Schools and Staffing Survey, Data File User's Manual Volume I: Survey Documentation

• 1993–94 Schools and Staffing Survey, Data File User's Manual Volume II: Restricted-Use Codebook

• 1993–94 Schools and Staffing Survey, Data File User's Manual Volume III: Public-Use Codebook

• 1993–94 Schools and Staffing Survey, Data File User's Manual Volume IV: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Restricted-Use Codebooks: Administrator, Schools, and Teachers

• 1993–94 Schools and Staffing Survey, Data File User's Manual Volume V: Restricted-Use Codebook Students' Records

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• Using Classroom Instructional Process Items in National Center for Education Statistics Study to Measure Student Opportunity to Learn: A Progress Report

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• Why do Teachers Leave Teaching? Reasons for Teacher Attrition from the Teacher Followup Survey

NCES Working Papers Related to SASS

WP 94-01 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). Papers Presented at the Meetings of the American Statistical Association

Section on Survey Research Methods, August 1992

a. "The Schools and Staffing Survey: Research Issues"

b. "The Schools and Staffing Survey: How Reinterview Measures Data Quality"

c. "Mail Versus Telephone Response in the 1991 Schools and Staffing Surveys"

d. "Questionnaire Research in the Schools and Staffing Survey: A Cognitive Approach"

e. "Balance Half-Sample Replication with Aggregation Units"

f. "Characteristics of Nonrespondents in the Schools and Staffing Surveys' School Sample"

g. "Improving Reliability and Comparability on NCES Data on Teachers and Other Education Staff"

Establishment Surveys Conference, June 1993

a. "Sampling Frames at the United States National Center for Education Statistics"

b. "Monitoring Data Quality in Education Surveys"

Section on Survey Research Methods, August 1993

a. "Generalized Variance Functions for the Schools and Staffing Surveys"

b. "A Bootstrap Variance Estimator for the Schools and Staffing Survey

c. "Adjusting for Nonresponse Bias of Correlated Items Using Logistic Regression"

d. "Comparisons of School Locale Setting: Self-Reported Versus Assigned"

e. "Characteristics of Nonrespondents to the 1990–91 Schools and Staffing Survey

Social Statistics Section, August 1993

a. "Implicit Markets for Teacher Quality and School Attributes"

b. "Who Decides? Principals' and Teachers' Views on Decision-Making"

c. "Determinants of Pupil-Teacher Ratios at School Sites: Evidence from the Schools and Staffing Survey"

WP 94-02 Generalized Variance Estimates for Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS)

WP 94-03 1991 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) Reinterview Response Variance Report

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f. "Whither Didst Thou Go? Retention, Reassignment, Migration, and Attrition of Special and General Education Teachers in National Perspective"

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b. "Estimation Issues Related to the Student Component of the SASS"

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